

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY
HISTORIC SITE SUMMARY SHEET

Survey #: P.G. #71B-2-1 Building Date: ca. 1870

Building Name: Straining House

Location: 13005 7th Street, Bowie, Maryland

Private/Residence/Unoccupied/Fair/Inaccessible

Description

The Straining House is a front-gabled brick town house with Italianate features, which stands on a lot in the town of Huntington (now known as Bowie). The main block is two stories high and three bays by five. Principal facade is the north gable end, which fronts directly on 7th Street; entrance is in the first bay, through a replacement door. The opening for the door has been decreased in size; a flat arch is still visible in the brickwork seven courses above the modern door opening. The other openings are filled with round-arched windows, 2/2 double hung sash; all have plain wooden sills and no shutters. Fenestration on the long east and west sides of the building has been altered. The gable roof is covered with gray asphalt shingle; it has a plain boxed cornice and overhanging eaves. Interior of the main block consists of stairhall and parlor in the front, with two smaller rooms to the rear. The staircase has a heavy turned newel with mitered cap, and turned balusters. Molding of the door surrounds is multi-band ovolo, and there is a high molded baseboard. Attached to the rear of the building, and covering the door and round-arched window of the two-bay south gable end, is a one-story shed-roof frame addition.

Significance

The Straining House is perhaps the only surviving example in Prince George's County of a front-gabled brick town dwelling in the Italianate style. It was constructed circa 1870 in the newly platted town of Huntington. In 1869 Ben H. Plumb purchased circa 250 acres of farmland through which the main line of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad was being constructed. At the point where a spur line to Washington joined with the B&P RR, Plumb surveyed and platted a town of approximately one square mile; in 1870, he offered building lots for sale, each of 2,500 square feet. Several stores were constructed, lots were reserved for school and churches, two parks were laid out, and the railroad company began construction of depot, round house and machine shops. The subject house stands on Lot 15 of Square 16, and is one of the first houses constructed in the town of Huntington. In 1874 it was acquired by John Straining, a German merchant who purchased a large number of lots in the new town, and operated a general store. It remained the Straining family home until it was sold in 1943. The Straining House is probably the last surviving example of its type in Prince George's County. Built in the early days of Huntington City, it exemplifies the front-gabled Italianate style of urban residence, and stands today as one of the earliest surviving dwellings of that railroad era town.

Acreage: 15,000 sq. ft.

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

Maryland Historical Trust

State Historic Sites Inventory Form

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Straining House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 13005 7th Street ☐ not for publicationcity, town Bowie ☐ vicinity of congressional district 5state Maryland county Prince George's County

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Michael Steelestreet & number 945 N. Pegram Street telephone no.:city, town Alexandria state and zip code Virginia 22304

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County Courthouse liber 6038street & number Main Street folio 134city, town Upper Marlboro, state MD. 20772

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Prince George's County Inventory of Historic Sites (part of #71B-2)date 1974 ☐ federal ☐ state ☒ county ☐ localdepository for survey records History Division, M-NCPPCcity, town Riverdale state MD.

7. Description

Survey No. #71B- 2-1

Condition

☐ excellent
☐ good
☒ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Straining House is a front-gabled town house, which incorporates features of the Italianate style. It consists of a gable-roof main block, built of brick, to which a frame rear extension was later added. It stands on a lot in the town of Huntington (now known as Bowie).

The main block is two stories, built of brick in American bond (seven courses of stretchers to each course of headers); it is circa 21 by 41 feet, three bays by five. Principal facade is the north gable end, which fronts directly on 7th Street, one of the original streets of the town of Huntington. Entrance is in the first bay of this north gable end, through a replacement door. The opening for the door has been decreased in size; a flat arch is still visible in the brickwork seven courses above the modern door opening, at the same level with the window openings. The other openings are filled with round-arched windows, 2/2 double hung sash, typical of the plainer Italianate style. These windows are longer on the first story of the north gable end; all have plain wooden sills and no shutters.

Fenestration on the long east and west sides of the building has been altered. In the southmost bay of each side, a small square modern window has replaced the original round-arched window on the first story. A window in the third bay of the east facade (first story) has been structurally closed. In the second bay of the east elevation is a door, with two-pane fan transom, approached by a flight of four steps and a concrete stoop. A door in the second bay of the west elevation has been structurally closed; its flat arch is still visible in the brickwork.

The gable roof is covered with gray asphalt shingle; it has a plain boxed cornice and overhanging eaves. There is a stove chimney in the east plane of the roof between first and second bays.

Interior of the main block consists of stairhall and parlor in the front, with two smaller rooms to the rear. The staircase rises along the east wall; the rest of the stairhall has been enclosed with modern (mid-twentieth century?) panelling, forming a storage room accessible from the rear. The staircase has a heavy turned newel with mitered cap, and turned balusters. Molding of the door surrounds is multi-band ovolo, and there is a high molded baseboard.

Attached to the rear of the building, and covering the door and round-arched window of the two-bay south gable end, is a one-story shed-roof frame addition. It is two bays deep, and has entrance in the second bay of the east facade. An exterior concrete block stove chimney rises near its northwest corner.

To the rear of the house, at the south end of the lot, is a frame gable-roofed shed, in deteriorating condition.

8. Significance

Survey No. P.G. #71B- 2-1

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
				Local History

Specific dates	Builder/Architect
circa 1870	

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

The Straining House is perhaps the only surviving example in Prince George's County of a front-gabled brick town dwelling in the Italianate style. It was constructed circa 1870 in the newly platted town of Huntington.

In 1869 Ben H. Plumb purchased circa 250 acres of farmland from the estate of Henry Carrick, through which the main line of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad was being constructed. At the point where a spur line to Washington, D.C. joined with the B&P RR, Plumb surveyed and platted a town of approximately one square mile.¹ In 1870, he published a Prospectus of Huntington, which described the new town, and offered for sale building lots, each of 2,500 square feet. Two carpenters, brought for the purpose, began building dwellings on lots already purchased. Several stores were constructed, lots were reserved for school and churches, two parks were laid out, and the railroad company began construction of depot, round house and machine shops.² (The Depot itself was from the beginning known as Bowie Station, after members of the family who had backed the construction of the railroad line; by 1890 the town, originally named Huntington, had also come to be known as Bowie.)

The subject house stands on Lot 15 of Square 16, and is one of the first houses constructed in the town of Huntington. In 1874 it was acquired by John Straining, a German merchant who purchased a large number of lots in the new town, and operated a general store. Between 1874 and 1884, when a Methodist Church was built near the railroad tracks, the newly formed Bowie Methodist congregation met in the Straining family's home. John Straining died in 1894 and his property passed to his widow and children. At some time in the early twentieth century, a shed-roof frame section was added in the rear of the house. It was sold out of the Straining family in 1943.³

The Straining House is probably the last surviving example of its type in Prince George's County. Built in the early days of Huntington City, it exemplifies the front-gabled Italianate style of urban residence, and stands today as the earliest surviving dwelling of that railroad era town.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. P.G. #71B-2-1

cf. Notes, item #8
cf. Chain of Title

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 15,000 sq. ft.Tax Map 29 1000Quadrangle name Laurel, Section I

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearl, Research Historianorganization P.G. Historic Preservation Comm. date February 1986street & number c/o County Planning Div., M-NCPPC telephone 952-3521city or town Upper Marlboro, state MD. 20772

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

#8. Continued

Notes

1 Prince George's County Deed HB #2:861; Prospectus of Huntington, Prince George's County, 1870; Plat of Huntington City, J.C. Lang, 1870.

2 Prospectus of Huntington, 1870.

3 Prince George's County Deed, RSW #1:108; Estate Files #2341 and 5401; Will WTD #3:522; Deed #722:255.

Chain of Title

Straining House

P.G. #71B-2-1

#6038:134
31 Dec. 1984
Deed

Louise A. Barry, surviving tenant with Daniel J. Barry (deceased 1975) to Michael and Tammy Steele (\$45,000); Block 16, Lots 14-19 in Bowie, as per Plat A-133B; same which grantors acquired by #722:255.

#722:255
23 Nov. 1943
Deed

Charles A. and Dora Straining to Daniel and Louise Barry; Square 16, Lots 14-25 in Bowie (Plat Book A-133).

WTD #3:522
March 1933
Will

Testator, Elizabeth E. Straining; real estate to son, Charles A. Straining.

#2341
1915
Estate File

John Straining, deceased 17 Dec. 1894 intestate; heirs-at-law include widow, Elizabeth E. Straining.

RSW #1:108
21 March 1874
Deed

Phelemn and Elizabeth Welch of D.C. to John Straining of Huntington; Square 16, Lots 14 and 15.

HB #7:101
6 Feb. 1873
Deed

James & Frances Thompson, and Lizzie Plumb, wife of Ben Plumb of D.C. to Philemon Welch, lots in Huntington including Square 16, Lots 14 and 15.

R-R

WILLIAM T. HUBBERT
5373/083
4-80A. P.213

R-R

R-55

LAUREL & BONIE RD

71B-2-1

71B-2-6

71B-2-7

71B-2-5

8899

C-C

71B-2-2

R-55

C-C

71B-2-3

71B-2-4

71B-13

1162

R-R

I-1

NEW JERSEY STEEL CORP.
5545/680

NANCY BROWN
4182/813

R-R

71B-12

KLINE SUB

71B-11

PG:71B-2-1



PG#71B-2-1

Straining House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
February 1986
Northeast 3/4 elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



PG#71B-2-1

Straining House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
February 1986
East elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis,
MD



P.G.#71B-2-1

Straining House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
January 1986
North elevation
Neg: Md.Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



P.G.#71B-2-1

Straining House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
February 1986
South elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



PG#71B-2-1

Straining House
Prince George's County, MD
Susan G. Pearl
February 1986
Northwest 3/4 elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD



P.G.#71B-2-1

Straining House

Prince George's County, MD

Susan G. Pearl

February 1986

Outbuildings from North

Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, MD